

LOSS
OF THE
STEAMSHIP "ATLANTIC"

OF THE "WHITE STAR" LINE,

WITH

SCENES AND INCIDENTS

During and after the Wreck.

TORONTO:
MCLEISH & CO., PRINTERS.

1873.

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THE STEAM SHIP "ATLANTIC"

OR THE "WHITE STAR LINE"

WITH

SCENES AND INCIDENTS

DEPARTING AND ARRIVING THE SHIP.



NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., PRINTERS.

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LOSS

OF THE

STEAM SHIP "ATLANTIC,"

OF THE "WHITE STAR" LINE.

WHILE many are still mourning the loss of friends, and as if it were but yesterday we had the sad story of the *Northfleet*, there comes to us another of those dreadful marine disasters by which a helpless crowd of human beings are swept away without warning into eternity. Out of the three hundred women and children, not one of the women, and only one child escaped the fate of their companions—the majority of whom were washed out of the steerage. It is impossible to realize without a shudder, the picture of the enormous wave which carried these unfortunates upon its crest, past the vessel and out to sea. The weather was bad, the sea rough, and the night dark. The rock on which the *Atlantic* struck is clearly laid down in the charts, and why her position was mistaken, it appears difficult to tell. The coast is an extremely perilous one, and calls for the display of great vigilance and care.

While there are every year a large number of wrecks, scarcely noticed except by owners, or passed by with brief mention by the newspapers, the record of great disasters at sea, which shock the reader is long and terrible. The history of the present

century alone is full of instances. A list of the principal ones will be given further on. There were disasters enough, but the wreck of the *Atlantic* is beyond them all for the extent of its fatality.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ATLANTIC.

• The *Atlantic* was launched at Belfast, Ireland, in 1871; was 420 feet long, 40 feet beam, and 23 feet depth of hold, and registered 3,723 tons. She was constructed of iron, and had four masts and six water-tight bulkheads. She was fitted with eleven boilers and four cylinders on the compound principle. A certain magnificence marked the adornments and upholstery of the *Atlantic*. The saloon was 80 feet long, and extended entirely across for a width of 40 feet. The lounges and fixed seats were upholstered in crimson velvet. The pannels of the saloon were damask, white, and pink; and the pilasters, brackets, and cornices were of teak nicked out with gold. The bed hangings of the staterooms and sleeping berths, which were large and commodious, were of green reps; and the appointments were in all respects elegant and complete. The *Atlantic* arrived in New York on her first outward voyage from Liverpool in June 1871. She left on her first return voyage on July the first, following. This was her nineteenth trip. She was valued at \$500,000.

THE CAPTAIN'S STATEMENT.

"Sailed from Liverpool March 20th; during the first part of the passage had favourable weather and easterly winds; on the 24th, 25th, and 26th, experienced heavy south-west and westerly gales, which brought the ship down to one hundred and eighteen miles a day. On the 31st of March, the engineer's report showed only 127 tons of coal on board. We were then 460 miles east of Sandy Hook, wind S. W. and high westerly swell and falling barometer, the ship

steaming only eight knots per hour. Considered the risk too great to push on, as we might find ourselves in the event of a gale short, out from any port of supply, and so decided to bear up for Halifax, at one p.m., on the 31st, Sambro Island north five degrees, east, distant 170 miles, ship's speed varying from eight knots an hour to twelve; wind south during the first part with rain; veered to the westward at eight p.m., with clear weather at midnight; judged the ship to have made 122 miles, which would place her 48 miles south of Sambro. I then left the deck and went into the chart-room leaving orders about the lookouts and to let me know if they saw anything, and call me at three a.m., intending then to put the ship's head off to the southward, and await daylight. My first intimation of the catastrophe, was the striking of the ship on Mar's Island, and remaining fast. The sea immediately swept away all the port boats. The officers went to their stations, and commenced clearing away the weather boats; rockets were fired by the second officer. Before the boats could be cleared, only ten minutes having elapsed, the ship keeled heavily to port, rendering the starboard boats useless. Seeing no help could be got from the boats, I got the passengers into the rigging, and outside the rails, and encouraged them to go forward, where the ship was highest and less exposed to the water. The third officer, Mr. Brady, and quartermasters Owens, and Speakman, having by this time established communication with the out-lying rock, about forty yards distant, by means of a line, got four other lines to the rock, along which, about two hundred people passed. Between the rock, and the shore, was a passage one hundred yards wide. A rope was successfully passed across this, by which means about fifty got to the land; though many were drowned in the attempt. At five a.m. the first boat appeared from the island, but she was too small to be of any assistance. Through the exertions of Mr. Brady, third officer, the islanders were aroused, and by six a.m. three large

boats came to our assistance. By their efforts, all who remained on the side of the ship and on the rock were landed in safety, and cared for by a poor fisherman named Clancy and his daughter. During the day, the survivors, to the number of 429, were drafted off to the various houses scattered about the village. The resident magistrate, Edmund Ryan, Esq., rendered valuable assistance. The chief officer having got up the mizzen rigging, the sea cut off his retreat. He stood for six hours by a woman who had been placed in the rigging. The sea was too high to attempt his rescue. At three p.m. a clergyman, Rev. Mr. Ancient, succeeded in passing him a line, and getting him off. Many of the passengers, saloon and steerage, died in the rigging from cold, amongst the number the purser of the ship. Before the boats went out, I placed two ladies in the life-boat, but finding the boat useless, carried them to the main rigging, where I left them, and went aft, to encourage others to go forward on the side of the ship."

STATEMENT FROM THE "CHRONICLE."

The following is the "Chronicle's" report of the disaster:—It is our painful duty this morning to record the most terrible marine disaster that has ever occurred on our coast, the loss of a great ocean steamship, with about 750 lives. Yesterday afternoon, a report became current that a steamer had been wrecked somewhere on the coast, and one or two lives lost. The report was regarded as one of the canards put afloat on All-Fools-day, and little regard was paid to it. Soon the report became more definite, and the evening papers were able to state that the steamer "*Atlantic*," of the White Star Line, was ashore near Prospect, and several lives had been lost. Even yet the public were inclined to regard the story as a malicious hoax. A little later, however, it became known that the report was well founded, and but a

small part of the truth had been told ; the fact being, that the *Atlantic* had been wrecked on Meagher's rock, near Prospect, 22 miles west of Halifax, and of about 1,000 souls on board, 750 were lost. Need we say the terrible announcement created a profound feeling of horror throughout the community. Having ascertained that one man from the wrecked ship had arrived in town, a reporter went in search of him, and found him in an eating house in Upper Water Street. He proved to be Mr. Brady, third officer of the *Atlantic*. Bruised and worn out, and almost speechless, after the terrible events of the morning, he was, as might be expected, in no condition to talk. Nevertheless, he cheerfully consented to answer the reporter's questions, and gave such information as he could. The *Atlantic*, Mr. Brady said, left Liverpool on Thursday, March 20th, for New York ; touched at Queenstown the next day, to receive mails and passengers ; after which she started on her voyage across the ocean. She had a full cargo of general merchandize, and a very large number of passengers. Mr. Brady could not give the precise number, but thought there were more than 800 in the steerage, and about 50 in the cabin. These, with the crew, would make a total number of not less than 1,000 souls. She was commanded by Captain James Agnew Williams. Rough weather was experienced ; but nothing worthy of note occurred until Monday, the 31st, when coal being short, Captain Williams resolved to put into Halifax for a supply. The Captain and Mr. Brady had the night watch up to midnight, when they were relieved by the chief and fourth officers. At that time they judged that the Sambro light then bore N.N.W. thirty-nine miles. The sea was rough, and the night dark. The chief and fourth officers having taken charge, Mr. Brady went below, and turned into his berth. The Captain at the same time went into his room, to lie down. What occurred between midnight and two o'clock, the time at which the disaster occurred, Mr.

Brady cannot tell, as he was sleeping. He was awakened by being thrown out of his berth by the shock, when the steamer struck. She struck heavily three or four times. Mr Brady ran up to the deck, and found it full of passengers. He found an axe, and with it commenced to clear away the starboard life-boat. He observed that the Captain and other officers were engaged in clearing the other boats. Mr. Brady succeeded in getting his life-boat out, and a rush was made for the boat. This was the only boat launched, and it had no sooner touched the water than a crowd made a rush to get into it. Mr. Brady had to use force to prevent them crowding in. He put two women in, and about a dozen men also got in. The steamer sunk just then, and in doing so, fell over, and sank the boat, with its living freight. The boat was carried down with the steamer, and all in it were drowned. The hull of the steamer became almost totally submerged, and only the bow and the masts remained above water. The greater part of the passengers were in their rooms below at the time, and were immediately drowned. Indeed, so soon after striking did the vessel sink, that many of the passengers were, no doubt, sleeping peacefully, in entire ignorance of all that was going on around them, and passed into eternity without a protracted struggle. Of those on deck, numbering several hundred, many were washed overboard when the ship fell over, and their cries for help, as they struggled in vain for life, were most heart-rending. Many, however, had taken refuge in the rigging and on the bow, and were still living, but with the prospect of almost certain death before them, for they knew not where they were, and were in momentary expectation of the ship sinking further, and engulfing them all, even as they were clinging in desperation to the rigging, with the sea washing them continuously. Their situation was most trying, and every few minutes some of them, benumbed by cold and exhausted from their struggles, loosed their

hold, and perished. Two steamers left here at one o'clock to-day, for the scene. There will be nothing further till they return.

STATEMENT OF MR. J. A. FIRTH.

Mr. J. A. Firth, of the *Atlantic*, made a statement in substance as follows:—"My watch ended at twelve o'clock on Monday night. The second and fourth officers took charge, and I went to my berth. I was aroused by the shock of the vessel striking. The second officer came down to my room and said the ship was ashore, and he was afraid she was gone. I put on a few articles of clothing, got an axe, and went on deck to clear the boats. The ship had reeled over before I reached the deck. I cleared the two starboard boats; just then a heavy sea swept our boats away. I was holding fast to the mizzenmast rigging, and now climbed higher for safety. The night was dark, and the spray was so thick we could not see well what was going on around us. I saw men on the rock, but did not know how they got there. All who were alive on board were in the rigging. When daylight came, I counted 32 persons in the mizzenmast rigging with me, including one woman. When these saw that there were lines between the ship and the shore many of them attempted to go forward to the lines, and in doing so were washed overboard and drowned. Many reached the shore by aid of the lines, and the fisherman's boats rescued many more. At last all had either been washed of or rescued except me, the woman, and a boy. The sea had become so rough that the boats could not venture near us. Soon the boy was washed off, but he swam gallantly and reached one of the boats in safety. I got a firm hold of the woman and secured her in the rigging. I could see the people on shore, and hailed them, but they were unable to help us. At two o'clock in the afternoon, after we had been in the rigging ten hours, the Rev. Mr. Ancient, Church of England clergyman,

whose noble conduct I can never forget while I live, got a crew of four men to row him out to the wreck. He got into the main rigging and procured a line, then advanced as far as he could towards me and threw it to me. I caught it, made it fast around my body, and then jumped clear. A sea swept me off the wreck, but Mr. Ancient held fast to the line, pulled me back, and got me safely in the boat. I was then so exhausted and benumbed that I was hardly able to do anything for myself, and but for the clergyman's gallant conduct I must have perished soon. The woman, after bearing up with remarkable strength under her great trials, had died two hours before Mr. Ancient arrived. Her half naked body was still fast in the rigging, a terribly ghastly spectacle, rendered more ghastly by the contrast with the numerous jewels which sparkled on her hands. We had to leave her body there. The scene at the wreck was an awful one, such as I had never before witnessed, and hope never to witness again. Comparatively few bodies drifted ashore; most of them, with such articles as came out of the ship while I was on her, were carried to sea."

MR. FREEMAN D. MARKWALD'S ACCOUNT.

Mr. Freeman D. Markwald, of New York, states:—"I turned into my berth at nine o'clock on Monday night and was aroused by the shock of the ship striking. All the men in the cabin rushed on deck to see what was wrong. I went into the saloon, on deck, and observed by a clock that the time was 20 minutes past 3. Rockets were being fired. Within fifteen minutes from the time the ship struck, she careened. The captain, with his officers, behaved bravely. They cried out, 'Take to the rigging; it's your last chance.' At daybreak, the fisherman's boats came out, and rescued a number of us, and landed us on Marr's Island. The handful of people on the Island warmly welcomed us, gave us food

and clothing, and did all for us that they could. Edmund Ryan, a magistrate, Denis Ryan, and their wives, were especially active in ministering to our wants. There were three boats' crews whose names deserve a high place on the roll of honour. The first boat was manned by Denis Ryan, James Coolen, Frank Ryan, John Blackburn, and Ben Blackburn; the second by James O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Patrick Dollard, William Lacey, and T. J. Toorg. I regret that I have not the names of the other crew. To these men chiefly belong the credit of having, at the risk of their own lives, rescued from death over four hundred souls. They, as well as several others of whose bravery I have heard, should certainly receive some reward for their noble conduct. The passengers coming up in the *Delta* were ringing high the praises of the gallantry of the boats' crews already referred to, and of the Rev. Mr. Ancient, who rescued the perishing chief officer, Brady, and Quarter-masters Speakman and Owens, who first established communication with the shore. The kindness of the Prospect people was also universally acknowledged and praised."

THE SCENE UPON THE BEACH.

When day dawned on Thursday morning, although the night previous had been a stormy one, the waters of Prospect Harbour were calm and smooth as glass. The numerous inlets and surrounding straits which separated the rocky masses studding the coast were thronged by fishermen's boats of every description. These composed the wrecking fleet, each boat of which was equipped with grappling-irons, drags and ropes, bent upon gathering their sad harvest.

People, filled with curiosity, examined every rocky surface and piece of the beach along the water line, in quest of bodies or fragments of the wreck. Over a granite mass, and on the shore,

beyond a large block of stone, lay rows of poor creatures, stark, staring, dead! Side by side were they—young and old, strong and weak, boy and girl—still in death! In every posture too—over, across, arm on each other, half recumbent, wholly so, on their backs, face downward, and some upon their sides, head on arm as if quietly sleeping. Many were lashed to pieces of spars; others clung to fragments of the *debris*, by means of which they had, in their terrible struggle for life, hoped to ride safely on the surfcrested rollers ashore. Sailors in flannel shirts and dreadnoughts, lay beside little children in their night-dresses; semi-nude mothers near the latter told how "faithful even to death" they had striven to save their offspring; while stalwart men, stiff, stark and cold, slept upon the shore, beneath the pitying gaze of strangers, who had come too late to help them. Faces were discolored and bruised limbs broken in many, and yet there were those who seemed to have glided from sleep to its eldest sister death. It was an awful array of the tempest's victims.

Steam tugs and the *Delta* came down from Halifax, and took the survivors to that city, where they were received and treated with great kindness. The steamer *Falmouth* was afterward chartered, and conveyed the survivors to Portland, whence they were taken on a Pullman train to Boston, where they were entertained and cared for in Faneuil Hall. On Saturday evening, many of them left, by the *Old Colony* and *Newport*, for New York.

The investigation ordered by the Dominion Government was begun on Saturday, in the Custom House at Halifax, before the Collector, E. M. McDonald. The Captain, chief officer, and others, testified mainly in accordance with the foregoing statements. From their sworn testimony it would appear that 13 saloon passengers had been saved, 20 lost; 416 steerage passengers saved, 527 steerage and crew lost; totals, 429 saved, 547 lost. John Hanley, a boy who was pushed through a window by a man, was the only youth rescued. All women and children perished.

QUARTER-MASTER MR. PURDY FIRST TO GET ASHORE.

Wm. Purdy, Quarter-master :—" Was the first that attempted to swim ashore. I swam on shore. I landed on the rocks. I traversed from rock to rock, falling sometimes from sheer exhaustion. I found the signal-post, a place where the fishermen have to look out and signalise to the boats, and I then called out for help. Two old men and a boy came to our assistance, and I went to the house with them and procured a line, and retraced my steps to the beach, where I saw a lot of passengers and crew upon the rock. Speakman, the Quarter-Master, swam towards me with a line from the rock, and I hove my line and caught him, and pulled ashore. As soon as I had done so, we hauled in the line which he had from the rock, and made fast to the end of my line, so as to make it stronger. As soon as I got the line made fast, I told those who were on the rock to come ashore one by one, as I would. The first man saved in this way I do not know, but the second one was Mr. Brady, the third officer. I saved in this manner about 70, as near as I remember. In some instances, as the line was some distance overhead, and the person too exhausted, I had to reach down and pull them up, some I had to go into the water for, which was out of my depth, by a line fastened around my waist. In this manner the two old men would drag me and the man I rescued ashore. I remained there from 4 o'clock till 9, when I fell down through exhaustion. One of the stewards and somebody else relieved me, and I was carried away to a house where I was kindly cared for. The chief-steward, and another man that threw his arms around the steward's neck when coming ashore on the rope, were drowned at my feet. This statement is corroborated by that of the Quarter-master.

THE STEAMERS "*Lady Head*," "*Delta*," AND "*Goliath*,"

GO TO THE WRECK.

Early this morning, the Dominion Government steamer *Lady Head*, Captain Watson ; the Cunard steamer *Delta*, Captain Shaw ; and the steam-tug *Goliath*, Captain Jones, left the city for the scene of the wreck of the White Star steamer *Atlantic*, at Prospect, to render such assistance as they could. The *Lady Head* had on board a number of Custom-house officials, and the *Delta's* party included several newspaper reporters. The start was made about three o'clock, so that the steamers might reach the scene immediately after daylight. As the morning broke, the steamers approached Prospect, and those on board quickly learned the whereabouts of the ill-fated *Atlantic*, from the presence around her of a large fleet of fishing schooners and small boats. The locality is one that a mariner would be disposed to give a wide berth to, if possible, the shore being a succession of large beds of rock, with dangerous shoals running out for some distance, while the bay is studded with innumerable islands, large and small, all of solid rock, with scarcely a sign of vegetation or soil, or anything that grows ; yet frowning and dangerous as the place was, there was grandeur and beauty in the scene on this bright morning, when the angry waves were beating against the rocks, and enveloping the shore almost continually in clouds of glittering spray ; but the terrible story of the shipwreck absorbed too much of the attention of those on board the relieving steamers to allow them to spend many minutes in admiring the beauties of nature. The business of the vessels was to get on board the passengers and others who had been saved from the wreck and put on shore.

INCIDENTS OF THE WRECK.

Statements are made that the crew of the ship indulged in plunder of the dead bodies. One instance is related where a wretch mutilated the hand of a lady, to obtain possession of a diamond ring on her finger. The bodies of her and Mrs. Fisher, Vermont, and Miss Meritt, Chicago, were washed ashore yesterday, and lay side by side among eighty others. Their bodies will be forwarded home. A large number of coffins have been made here, and sent down to the scene of the wreck, to inter the dead. One woman passenger was confined only six hours before the disaster. Several passengers with life-buoys, overturned, were drowned before assistance could be rendered. Some who had life-buoys on, and endeavoured to reach the rock by means of the line from the vessel, not having them properly on, the lower part of their bodies were floated up, with their heads down. In this manner many of them were drowned before reaching the rock. At one time during the weary watch before dawn, the fore-boom broke loose from its fastenings, and, swinging around, instantly crushed to death about twenty persons, who were gathered on the house on deck. Among the passengers was one who had been in the States for some time, and had proceeded a few trips before to England, for the purpose of bringing his wife and family of five children out to the new home he had provided for them in the new world. Father and all perished. Several of the passengers landed from the Delta yesterday were considerably bruised about the body and lower limbs, and one man had his two legs broken; and others were so sore from being washed against the rocks that they were scarcely able to stand. Three or four were sent to the hospital last night. Two men reported saved, whose names were unknown, have arrived here; they are James Bateman, of London, England, and Edward Mills, of Belfast, Ireland. Bateman was the only one who succeeded in getting his wife upon the

rigging, where she died from exposure. Among the steerage passengers who gained the deck were a young Englishman, with his wife and child. Just after they had succeeded in getting into the rigging, a wave snatched away the child. Immediately afterwards an order came from the captain for all who could do so to get into the fore-rigging, because that part of the vessel was higher and less exposed. The young woman said that she was too much exhausted to attempt to move, but entreated her husband to go and save himself. He did so; but Mr. Firth, the chief officer, refused to leave her. He stood by her until she died and dropped into the sea; and then it became impossible for him to shift to a place of greater safety. He was the last person taken off. The survivors say it was a fearful sight to witness the manner in which many met their death. Unable to reach the deck in consequence of the jam in the gangway, numbers rushed through the port-hole, only to be seized by the waves and dashed to death against the sides of the vessel.

ACCOUNT OF THE PASSENGERS LANDING AT HALIFAX.

The Delta's passengers, in number 320, landed at the Cunard wharf. They were mostly men, from 20 to 35 years of age. Many were in a pitiable condition, without shoes, feet swollen and bruised, clothes torn and drenched, some with bits of carpet matting and blankets around them, and all fretted and sick from exposure all night. On reaching the locality, it was found that a considerable number more than at first named have been picked up and saved. Some old and feeble persons had died, after being rescued, from exhaustion and cold. All here have been comfortably victualled and cared for. The divers are expected to be successful in saving goods, if the weather continues favourable. The chief officer, though a long time in a perilous position, alone

on the wreck, was at last saved. He supported a lady who was on the rigging with him until she died. Second officer Worthington, the purser, and Christie the chief steward, were lost. The cabin passengers lost are as follows:—J. H. Price, Mr. Kruzer, Henry S. Hewitt, Mr. Merritt and wife, Miss Merritt and Miss Seyrumzer, all of New York; Mr. Davidson and daughter, Nevada; N. B. Wellington, Boston; Miss Brodie and Miss Barker, Chicago; C. M. Fisher and wife, Vermont; and Albert Sumner, San Francisco. The cabin passengers saved are:—F. D. Markwald, Brooklyn; S. W. Vick, Wilmington, N.C.; J. Spencer Jones, New Ross; Sir Lewis Levison, London; W. G. Gardner, Canterbury; Charles Allan, London; Henry Herd, Switzerland; Nicholas Brandt and Simon Cumacher, New York; Adolph Jugla, New York; Daniel Kinano, Springfield, Ohio; James Brow, Manchester; W. B. Richmond, Detroit; Dr. Cuppage, Surgeon; and the first, third, and fourth officers of the ship, and the captain.

NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF PASSENGERS.

There were 700 steerage passengers in the ill-fated vessel. The passengers and crew, as she sailed from Liverpool, were classified as follows:—English, 198 men, 74 women, 28 male children, 121 female children; Scotch, 7 men, 14 women; Irish, 43 men, 18 women, 3 children; other nationalities, 150 adult males, 32 women, 19 male children, and 18 female children. A large number of emigrants embarked at Queenstown, making the total number of souls upon the steamer, when she sailed from that port, 952.

CAPTAIN JAMES A. WILLIAMS.

James A. Williams, Captain of the *Atlantic* at the time of the disaster, has been familiar with salt water almost from the very hour of his birth. His father is a native of Wales, and has served

many years in the mercantile marine. At present he occupies a very important position on the Williams & Guion Line, at Liverpool.

James was born in that city, in 1838. During early life he accompanied his father's vessels, giving great attention to the study of navigation, and exhibiting the finest qualities of seamanship as his experience increased.

When the Williams and Guion Line of Ocean Steamships was started, in 1856, James was one of the first responsible officers chosen, and commanded in turn the *Manhattan*, *Wisconsin*, and *Colorado*. He remained with the company until 1871, when he entered the service of the White Star Line as second officer of the *Republic*.

It will be remembered that about a year ago this vessel was caught in a terrific storm, while approaching this port. For many hours it seemed impossible to save the ship. All hands put forth strenuous exertions, Capt. Williams being always at the front of danger. In a sudden lurch the *Republic* shipped an enormous wave, which tore away the lifeboats, and swept the deck of much of its working material.

Seeing the alarm of the crew, Captain Williams sprang from the bridge, and, in the endeavour to save one of the boats, was thrown violently to the deck, and sustained three fractures of his leg, besides having his eyes nearly torn from their sockets.

On the arrival of the *Republic* at New York, Capt. Williams was taken to St. Luke's Hospital, where his injuries confined him several months. Reporting for duty he was appointed first officer of the *Celtic*, and shortly after Captain of the *Atlantic*, and was making the second return voyage when the ship was lost.

It is particularly indelicate to increase the sadness of the disaster by allusions to Capt. Williams of an unpleasant personal character. Very thorough inquiries have been made concerning him of his

former employees and associates, and all agree that he is a skilful navigator, a seaman of great experience, and a gentleman. If, as it is alleged, he sought his state-room at the moment of supreme danger, it is but charitable to ascribe it to exhaustion, produced upon his weakened system by the trying vigils observed from the commencement of the storm. None of his employers have ever had occasion to doubt that he was other than an earnest, brave and reliable officer; and his former associates regard the aspersions cast upon him at this time as unusually cruel.

PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE DOMINION COURT OF ENQUIRY.

The enquiry ordered by the Dominion Government into the *Atlantic's* disaster was begun at the Custom-House, on Saturday. The Collector, E. M. McDonald, presided. Captain Phillimore, of H.M.S. *Sphynx* could not attend, as his ship was about to sail for Bermuda. Captain McKenzie was chosen instead, to assist the Collector. The Hon. S. T. Shannon, Q.C., and Mr. H. Blanchard, Q.C., appeared for the Government; and Mr. J. W. Ritchie, Q.C., for the Captain. The evidence, as published, is a recapitulation of previous reports.

The Captain submitted his official report to the managing agent of the White Star Line, Liverpool, and after being sworn, read it before the Court, and was cross-examined fully. It gives as his reason for bearing up for Halifax, that his coal and stores were short, and in the event of a westerly gale, the ship would have been cut off from supply. From the appearances and his observations, he judged it best to alter the ship's course at 1 p.m. on the 31st of March, being then 170 miles from Sambro, and at midnight was 48 miles from the light. Corrected the course the last time at 12.20, and then repeated caution and orders. The intention was to run on till 3 a.m., and then heave to, and await daybreak. Went into the chart-room, and at 2.40 told the servant not to wake him before three, when the second officer would call him. Soundings were taken. The course was not shifted, nor the speed slackened. Was not called, as ordered; and was unaware of anything until roused by the ship's striking. Had never been at Halifax before: the second officer had been twice. The Captain's evidence gives dates and figures in connection with the various

details of nautical incidents, and the events subsequent to the ship's striking. His evidence is generally confirmed by chief officer Firth, which is chiefly a history of the proceedings already reported.

The loss of second officer Metcalf, who was in charge, makes a blank in the chain of evidence, not likely to be filled.

Cabin passengers Daulkin and J. Spencer Jones, Nicholas Brandt, and C. Wallan, were examined, and then the chief officer, after which the court adjourned till Monday. The chief officer said :—" I cannot account for the disaster in no other way than that there was a strong current setting north and west, which we did not know of." He was the last man to leave the ship alive. He could not swim, and was rescued, when nearly exhausted, by the Rev. Mr. Ancient. Of the Captain, he says :—" I have had twenty-seven years' experience at sea, with a great many masters, and found Captain Williams all that could be expected of one in his position."

The investigation was resumed, pursuant to adjournment, at 10 o'clock on Monday morning. The first witness called was Cornelius W. Brady, third officer, who testified as follows :—Was third officer of the *Atlantic*; my watch was from 8 to 12 o'clock that night; the captain and four officers were all conversant with the ship's position. At 1 p.m. bore off for Halifax; course N. 24 E. by compass; there was on that course nine easterly variations. By solar observation, Sambro at noon bore N. 5 E., distant 170 miles. In the afternoon had variable weather, first S.E. with rain, then shifted to S.W.; cleared up; and then to W.N.W., fine with an occasional passage of cloud; brilliant starlight. At midnight, at the request of the captain, made out by the log scale the distance run since shifting our course at one o'clock to be 122 miles. This calculation is not always strictly correct, but is nearly so, and is corrected by our judgment. I did not look at

the chart, but knew the position of the ship, and that it was distant from Sambro 48 miles. We used a common log, and it was hove every two hours. The speed of a steamer often varies considerably from various causes—from currents, different qualities of coal used, etc. I did not know the number of revolutions that the screw made; but by looking over the side I could tell the speed that she was making, within half a mile. The course was shaped to counteract the westerly set of the current. I have been at Halifax twice before, but never to stop or lay there, and am not well acquainted with the coast. The captain's order, when he went below, was to call him immediately if any change in the weather occurred, that is, if it became hazy or thick. Both leads, patent and common, were on the bridge, ready to be thrown at any time. The captain did not give orders to heave the lead. I gave the captain's orders to the fourth officer, and immediately turned in. After being relieved, did not know anything afterwards till the ship struck. My berth was in the after end of the ship. My room was locked, and the fourth officer had the key. I had no means of getting out. I ran on deck just as I turned out of bed. I met the quartermaster Williams on the way. He was afterwards drowned. I asked him what was the matter. He answered, "My God, the ship has gone ashore." I ran at once to No. 5 life-boat. The captain's boat was on the saloon deck. My own boat had been stove during the previous heavy weather on the passage. I got an axe, and succeeded in clearing the boat. While in the act of launching the boat, the ship fell over on her side. As near as I can judge, it was six or eight minutes after she struck, that the ship reeled over. When I found that she was going over, I scrambled over and succeeded in getting into the mizen rigging. Finding that I was of no use there, I made my way forward, accompanied by quartermaster Owens, the store-keeper. I heard the captain at the main

rigging, and called. I do not suppose he heard me, in the confusion. When I got forward, I made out the rock in front of the ship. I thought that if I could get to the rock, I could save myself and others. Unrove the starboard foretopsail vang-anal rope, and also the signal halyards. I took these on the outside of the ship, and sent quartermaster Owens with them, to try to reach the rock, but he failed, and we had to pull him back to the ship. I then sent quartermaster Speakman. He succeeded, and I immediately followed him. We hauled the stout rope by means of the vang to the rock, which was about twenty-five yards, I suppose, from the ship. We hauled a number of men from the ship to the rock, but finding it getting crowded, we then made the rope fast to the rock, and communicated with the island by the same means; and in this way saved a number of lives. On the island I met Clancey, and asked him if I could communicate with Halifax. He told me that there was no regular means of communication, and that I would have to send a messenger on horseback. This I did, and walked back to the ship. Then boats came. I remained on the rock, encouraging the people; and thus saved a number of lives. Here the witness produced a diagram of the internal arrangements of the ship, and showed that there was nothing to prevent the steerage passengers from getting on deck. To my knowledge, nothing was said or done to impede any of the passengers in coming on deck: the statement that has been made that there was, is absurd and incorrect. The steerage passengers were well acquainted with all the ways of ingress and egress. From my own positive knowledge, the passengers had every facility afforded that was possible, under the circumstances, for reaching the deck; in fact, I met some of them going up when I was making my way to the deck. Am positive that no orders were given or carried out to keep the passengers below. Witness here produced another

plan, showing the position of the companion-way leading to the deck, of which many passengers availed themselves, in going to the deck. During the time that I was on watch, she may have been going faster at times than at others; but the speed was pretty uniform. I do not recollect what the speed was before we bore up; but it was increased after that. I do not know what the speed was when the vessel struck. The captain did all that any man could possibly do to save life. I could distinctly see and hear him from the rock exerting himself.

JOHN BROWN, fourth officer of the *Atlantic*, testified:—I joined the ship at Liverpool on the previous voyage. The captain, about one o'clock on Monday, directed me to alter the course to N. 24 E. for Halifax. At the time we were running seven knots. The coal was increased afterwards, and at four o'clock the speed was eleven knots per hour. I then went below and remained till six, when I again came on deck. The course and speed were the same. At eight o'clock I again went below and remained till twelve. The captain and first officer were on deck when I returned. The third officer told me the distance to Sambro light was forty-eight miles. Between one o'clock in the day and midnight the ship ran 122 miles. At midnight she was running nine knots per hour. I have the log. The wind was W. N. W. with little swell. The leads were all on the bridge ready for sounding. We could have sounded in an instant. Between half-past one and the time the ship struck I was on the saloon deck, about ten feet below the bridge. Two quartermasters, one at the wheel, were on deck at the same time; the captain's boy came up with a cup of cocoa at three o'clock. I told the boy not to call the captain till three o'clock, and afterwards the second officer told him that he would call the captain. The second mate was on the bridge. The night was cloudy, with here and there a peeping star, and not thick. Before I left the

deck, I went to the weather side, and shading my eyes with my hands, looked for the light; but did not see it or anything except the open sea. It was about half an hour from the time I left the deck till the ship struck. Did not let the boy go to call the captain, because I knew the ship had not run anything like her distance, forty-eight miles. All the officers knew that we were running in to make the shore. No one in my hearing told the second officer that the distance had been run. One of the quartermasters asked me if he should go to the main-yard to look for land. I told him it was too soon. I can only account for this decrease of speed from eleven to nine knots, in that they made a clearing of the bunkers below, or that the coal was of a poorer quality. One of the quartermasters was on the starboard side. The second officer was on the larboard side. I did not hear the roll of the sea on the shore, probably because of the noise of the engines. I left the wreck about nine o'clock on Tuesday, and have not been there since. We must have been a good mile from Pennant Point when we ran in, but I neither saw the breakers nor heard the roll. Was in the steerage at the time. I had not looked at the chart and did not know the coast. I have been at sea ten years, and an officer three years. To my knowledge nothing was done to prevent passengers coming on deck. The captain did everything he could to save life, and was much exhausted when he reached the shore. None of the officers spoke of heaving leads or stopping the ship.

WILLIAM HOGAN, a steerage passenger, examined by Mr. Shannon, testified:—"I went to bed on the night of the disaster at nine o'clock, and remained there till five bells—half past two o'clock. I went to the upper deck, and for a while walked up and down near the engine room. The night was extremely cold, but the weather was better than it had been before. I heard the watch call out three o'clock, and then went below. Before I did so I looked out; it

was partly for that reason I came on deck. I looked out on the side I afterwards found to be nearest the land. The sea was light. I neither saw nor heard anything to indicate the close proximity of land. Almost immediately after I laid down for the second time, I heard a fearful crash. The windows instantly opened. I looked out through a port-hole and saw the rock. My companion and myself made our way to the second deck. I do not know how we got up, because the concussion caused by the shock, had knocked the companion ladder away. Some of the passengers below called out, 'the doors are closed,' but I think they had in their hurry missed the place where the doors were. I found it very hard to get out. I positively believe that a great many more would have been saved had the means of exit been more ample. There is, I think, only room for one to get out at a time. I went to the side of the vessel nearest the land, and reached the engine room by the time the steam began to go off. I caught a rope. The ship turned over gradually and then sank. All who had not a hold of a rope or the rail went down instantly. I stopped on the ship till the boats came and took me off. The officers and crew all acted as good men would under the circumstances."

FOR THOSE AT SEA.

Eternal Father, strong to save,
 Whose arm hath bound the restless wave;
 Who bid'st the mighty ocean deep
 Its own appointed limits keep;
 O hear us, when we cry to Thee,
 For those in peril on the sea.

O Christ! whose voice the waters heard,
 And hushed their raging at Thy word;
 Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
 And calm amidst its rage did sleep;
 O hear us, when we cry to Thee,
 For those in peril on the sea.

Most Holy Spirit, who didst brood
 Upon the chaos, dark and rude,
 And bid its angry tumult cease,
 And give, for wild confusion, peace;
 O hear us, when we cry to Thee,
 For those in peril on the sea.

O Trinity of love and power,
 Our brethren shield in danger's hour:
 From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
 Protect them, whereso'er they go;
 Thus evermore shall rise to Thee
 Glad hymns of praise, from land and sea.

THE GREAT WRECKS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The dreadful shipwreck that has just occurred on the coast of Nova Scotia, resulting in the loss of hundreds of lives, is not on a parallel with any like disaster of this century. The following list of great wrecks will be interesting at this time :—

In February, 1805, the Abergavenny was lost on the Bill of Portland ; 300 perished.

In October, same year, the Ameas was lost off Newfoundland ; 340 perished.

December, 1805, the Aurora foundered on the Goodwin Sands ; 300 lives lost.

October, 1806, the Athenian lost near Tunis ; 347 perished,

February, 1807, the Ajax was burned off Teredos : 250 lost.

December, 1810, Minotaur lost on the Haak Bank ; 360 perished.

December, 1811, Saldanha lost on the Irish coast ; 300 perished.

December, 1812, the St. George, Defence, and Hero, lost on the coast of Jutland ; 2,000 perished.

January, 1816, Seahorse lost near Tramore Bay ; 365 soldiers of the 59th regiment perished.

August, 1831, Lady Sherbroke, lost near Cape Ray ; 273 perished.

August, 1833, Amphitrite, filled with female convicts, lost on Boulogne Sands ; all lost.

November, 1838, Protector ; 178 perished.

March, 1841, the President, of New York, lost in a gale ; never heard from.

December, 1847, the Avenger, lost on the coast of Africa ; 200 perished.

April, 1857, the *Exmouth*, bound for Quebec, lost, with 240 drowned.

March, 1850, *Royal Adelaide*, lost on the Tongue Sands, off Margate; over 400 perished.

February, 1852, the *Birkenhead*, troopship, lost on the coast of South Africa; 454 perished.

February, 1853, the *Independence*, lost on the coast of California, 140 persons drowned or burned to death.

September, 1853, the *Annie Jane*, lost west of Scotland; 384 lives lost.

January, 1853, the *Tayleur*, lost with 380 persons.

April, 1854, the *Favourite*, lost in a collision; 201 drowned.

May, 1854 the *Lady Nugent*, lost in a hurricane, with 400 persons.

September, 1854, the mail steamer *Arctic*, lost off Newfoundland.

In the same year the *City of Glasgow* disappeared, with all on board.

January, 1856, the *Collins* steamer *Pacific* disappeared with all on board. Never since heard of.

August, 1857, the *Central America* foundered at sea; lost 450 persons.

September, 1858, the *Austria*, burnt in mid-ocean; 471 lives lost

April, 1859, the *Pomona*, wrecked on Blackwater Band, through the master mistaking the light; 400 lost.

October, 1859, the *Royal Charter*, wrecked on Anglesea coast; 446 lives lost.

February, 1860, the *Hungarian*, wrecked off the coast of Nova Scotia, with all on board; 203 lost.

September, 1860, the *Lady Elgin*, lost on Lake Michigan, with 287 persons.

April, 1863, the *Anglo-Saxon*, wrecked on a reef off Cape Race, Newfoundland; about 237 out of 446 lives lost.

January, 1866, the London foundered in the Bay of Biscay ; about 220 perished.

In February, 1871, the City of Boston disappeared and never heard from.

February, 1873, the emigrant ship Northfleet, lost by collision, with 300 lives.

April, 1873, the Atlantic, wrecked on the coast of Halifax; 546 out of 975 lives lost.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that the loss of life by the Atlantic, at Halifax, is a calamity that has but few parallels in the course of over seventy years.

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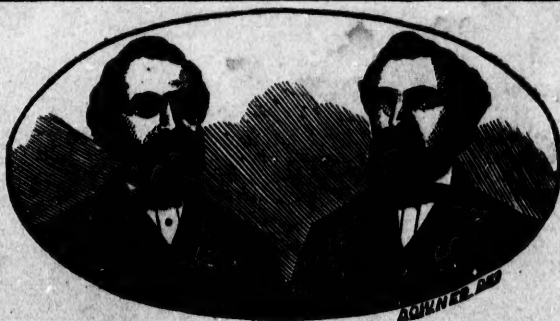
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